

December 1, 2005

Charles W. Curry, Chair
Augusta County Agricultural Task Force
Augusta County Community Development Office
18 Government Center Lane
Verona, Virginia, 24482

Dear Agricultural Organization Leader:

Mr. F. James Bailey, Jr., Chairman of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors, convened the Agricultural Task Force on February 24, 2005. The task force's charge was to provide input to the County on sustaining agriculture, to evaluate what is being done, to review ordinances and policies, and to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The goal statement for the task force was *to identify major challenges facing agriculture in Augusta County and recommend ways to assure the future of preserving and promoting a strong agricultural economy over the next several decades.*

With the realization that a majority of the farms in Augusta County will transfer ownership and management during the next several decades, the timeliness and significance of this effort was a bit staggering. The task force effort was intense and dedicated and has resulted in 60 significant findings and 52 recommendations. During the initial brainstorming session your task force identified 31 threats to our agricultural economy. **These threats are real and serious.**

Before we finish our work and present a report to the Board of Supervisors, it is important to hear a response from the agriculture community. A draft copy (without the appendix) of the *"Report of the Augusta County Agricultural Task Force—An Industry at Risk"* is located at <http://www.co.augusta.va.us/> (click on Agricultural Task Force).

A public meeting will be held on **December 8, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Meeting Room of the Augusta County Government Center.** This meeting has been advertised to the general public and the following organizations are requested to make comments on the Report: Augusta Community Partnership, Chamber of Commerce, Extension Service, Fair Board, Farm Bureau, FFA, 4-H, Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation District, Young Farmers, Staunton/Augusta Farmers' Market, Valley Conservation Council, and other agriculture-related groups.

I realize that we have not allowed much time to review the report; however, I would appreciate your cooperation in giving this request your immediate attention. It is critical for the Comprehensive Plan revision process that the Agricultural Task Force completes our work in the very near future.

Sincerely,

Charles W. Curry, Chair
Augusta County Agricultural Task Force